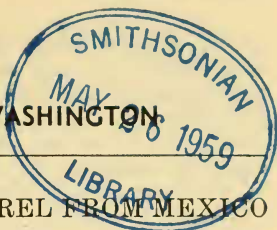


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A NEW SPOTTED GROUND SQUIRREL FROM MEXICO

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Collecting of mammals by students at the University of Illinois in the sand dunes of northern Chihuahua has revealed the presence there of an undescribed race of the spotted ground squirrel, *Citellus spilosoma*. The particular sand dunes are those surrounding the small town of Samalayuca, twenty-four miles south of El Paso, Texas.

Spotted ground squirrels are not abundant in this dune area in summer, when collecting has been done. For example, on the fourth of August, 1958, the first squirrel was not seen moving about on the dunes until late afternoon (after 4:30 p.m.). On the same day, the sun-temperature on these dunes was 116°F. at 12:30 p.m.; 120°F. at 2:00 p.m. On another occasion, temperature taken in the early morning ranged from 90°F. to 98°F. between 8.00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

The dunes consist of light-colored but not white sands. There are only a few shrubby plants, such as mesquite and yucca, growing in the dunes.

Two other rodents are endemic to the sand dunes area near Samalayuca: *Dipodomys ordii extractus* Setzer and *Onychomys leucogaster albescentis* Merriam.

Capitalized color terms are from Ridgway, Color Standards and Color Nomenclature (1912). Measurements are in millimeters.

Citellus spilosoma ammophilus, new subspecies

Type.—Adult, female, skin and skull, No. 12472, Univ. Illinois Mus. Nat. Hist., from 5½ mi. N Samalayuca, Chihuahua, Mexico; collected August 2, 1956, by Wayne H. Davis, original No. 2469.

Range.—Known only from the sand dunes area in the vicinity of Samalayuca, Chihuahua.

Diagnosis.—A race of *Citellus spilosoma* characterized by especially pale coloration. On the dorsum, in an area of minimum spotting, general color effect near Cream-Buff c. Color on dorsum of tail near Cinnamon-Buff c with terminal tip whitish. Underside of tail near Pinkish Buff. Dorsal surface of front and hind feet white. Eye ring present but so similar in color to adjacent light-colored areas that it gives the impression of being reduced or nearly absent. Lateral line area white. Underparts white.

In external measurements, *ammophilus* is of an average size for the species; skull slightly smaller than average. See *Measurements*.

Comparisons.—*Citellus spilosoma ammophilus* differs from *Citellus*

spilosoma canescens and *Citellus spilosoma arens* as follows: Upper parts much lighter; eye ring less conspicuous; dorsal surface of front feet whitish rather than Cinnamon-Buff or Pinkish Buff; dorsal surface of hind feet lighter; upper and under side of tail paler; sides along lateral line whitish rather than washed with Pinkish Buff or Pinkish Cinnamon; nearly all measurements, external and cranial, larger than for specimens of *canescens* from southeastern Arizona; hind foot especially larger; tail shorter.

Citellus spilosoma ammophilus differs from *Citellus spilosoma pallescens* in coloration much as it differs from *C. s. canescens*. It is paler or lighter in all respects. In external measurements, smaller than most *pallescens*; tail noticeably shorter but hind feet of large size in both subspecies. Skull of about same size as most specimens of *pallescens*, but more constricted in postorbital region.

Citellus spilosoma ammophilus differs from *Citellus spilosoma major* in much paler coloration; shorter tail; slightly smaller skull.

Measurements.—The type, an adult female, and a subadult female from 4.8 mi. S Samalayuca are, respectively: total length, 232, 232; length of tail, 68, 74; length of hind foot, 36, 35; length of ear, 8, 10; greatest length of skull, 39.8, 38.0; palatilar length, 17.6, 16.8; zygomatic breadth, 24.0, 23.1; cranial breadth, 19.2, 18.3; interorbital breadth, 9.1, 8.1; postorbital constriction, 14.2, 13.1; length of nasals, 13.7, 11.9; alveolar length of maxillary toothrow, 8.4, 7.9.

Remarks.—*Citellus spilosoma ammophilus* is the palest-colored race of the species. *C. s. ammophilus* occurs in a geographic area between the ranges of the races *canescens*, *pallescens*, and *major*. It differs from all three in lighter color; in addition, from *canescens* in larger size; from *pallescens* in smaller size and shorter tail; from *major* in slightly smaller size of skull and shorter tail.

Vernon Bailey (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 15: 118, 1902) described the subspecies *C. s. arens* from El Paso, Texas, which is not far-distant from the type locality of *C. s. ammophilus*. It seems clear after examining Bailey's material that the name *arens* does not apply to specimens from the dunes near Samalayuca. His race is very similar to *C. s. canescens*.

The race *ammophilus* may be restricted to the sand dunes around Samalayuca, Chihuahua. However, there are other sand dunes, quite extensive, to the west of Samalayuca, near Medanos and Barreal, Chihuahua. Possibly spotted ground squirrels of the subspecies *C. s. ammophilus* occur there. In parts of southern Chihuahua, Colima, and Durango, there are large, long-established dunes. Whether spotted ground squirrels, *Citellus spilosoma*, occur in these is not known, and if they should, the degree of paleness is unknown. Some specimens in our collections taken short distances from some of these dunes indicate that they are slightly paler than most *pallescens*. These specimens, however, are not as pale as *ammophilus*.

Specimens examined.—Chihuahua: 5½ mi. N. Samalayuca, 1; 4.8 mi. S Samalayuca, 1.